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Manifesto of the Canadian Farmer



As presented to the Cabinet of the Government of Canada on January 27th, 1941, by a delegation of 22 representatives from the Canadian Federation of Agriculture.

Introduction

The annual convention of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture was held in Toronto on January 20th to 25th. The delegates were men of wide experience in farm organization. Many of them were practical farmers, many were successful managers or executives of big business co-operatives. They represented Canadian agriculture from coast to coast.

These men went to work in a cool-headed, deliberate manner to analyze the economic condition of Canadian agriculture. Their purpose was to make constructive proposals calculated to help agriculture, which would help Canada, and which would enable farmers of the Dominion to make the greatest contribution to the war effort.

A Canadian farm manifesto was prepared and endorsed by the convention. A delegation of twenty-two men then went to Ottawa and presented the manifesto to a meeting of the Federal Cabinet. Rt. Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King and his ministers gave the delegation a friendly hearing and complimented them on the fairness and reasonableness of the submission and the courteous manner in which it was presented. He particularly stressed the fact that the government appreciates the extent of the contribution which the farm people have made to Canada's war effort.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is a federation of the principal farm organizations across Canada. Its membership includes the following provincial units:

1. British Columbia Chamber of Agriculture.
2. Alberta Federation of Agriculture.
3. Saskatchewan Co-operative Conference.
4. Manitoba Federation of Agriculture.
5. Ontario Federation of Agriculture.
6. Certain Quebec organizations, including:
The Co-operative Federee de Quebec, and
also The Union Catholique Des Cultivateurs de Quebec.
7. Maritime Federation of Agriculture.

These provincial units have been established by the various farm organizations within the provinces, including both commercial, co-operative, and educational organizations.

In addition, its membership includes the following national or inter-provincial organizations:

1. Canadian Dairy Farmers' Federation.
2. Canadian Horticultural Council.
3. United Grain Growers Limited.

Manifesto of the Canadian Farmer

Canadian agriculture's first task and paramount duty is to place its whole strength and unite its resources from sea to sea behind Canada's war effort. The war must be won, and the greatest possible degree of National unity is essential if our war effort is to reach maximum efficiency.

Victory cannot be achieved without sacrifices. All classes of our people will be called upon to make sacrifices, and the agricultural industry is ready and willing to bear its full share of the heavy load which Canada has shouldered. It is vital, from considerations of National unity, that no one class shall be called upon to carry an undue share of the burden and that there should be equality of sacrifice by all classes.

As the tempo of industrial production is speeded up to meet the urgent need for munitions and war supplies, there is a grave danger that the present disparity between agricultural and industrial income will increase. More than three million Canadians now live on farms, and engage in the production of food supplies. Another two million live in rural areas directly dependent on the farm income for their livelihood. But, while there has been a tremendous rise in the National income, agriculture's share of the National income continues to decline, in the face of steadily increasing cost of production.

The continued production of abundant food supplies may be a vital factor in bringing the war to an early and successful conclusion. Already the British Prime Minister has dangled before the eyes of hungry Europe the prospect of abundant food supplies available from British sources, when he said in the British House of Commons:

"We shall do our best to encourage the building up of reserves of food all over the world, so that there will always be held before the eyes of the people of Europe, including I say this deliberately---the German and Austrian peoples, the certainty that the shattering of Nazi power will bring them all immediate food, freedom, and peace."

We believe that the men and women engaged in the production of these food supplies are doing work just as vital to the successful prosecution of the war as the men and women engaged in the production of munitions and other supplies.

In order to enable these millions of Canadians engaged in the business of agriculture, to play their proper part in the greatest crisis the world has known, two things are necessary:

1. There must be an immediate and substantial increase of farm income in relation to the National income.
2. A properly co-ordinated National policy for agriculture, including marketing as well as production, must be instituted.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture, therefore, proposes:

- (a) That since agricultural production costs have already increased, and will inevitably continue to increase as the war develops, our Governments should adopt measures to establish a proper relationship between the prices of agricultural commodities and the goods and services the farmer must purchase. Otherwise, there could easily be a decline in the efficiency of agricultural production, which would seriously hamper the war effort.
- (b) That immediate steps should be taken to develop a National wartime program for agriculture. In taking this stand the Canadian Federation of Agriculture realizes that changing international conditions may call for changes in policy, but makes it all the more necessary that there should be a greater degree of consultation between Governmental authorities and the representatives of organized agriculture.

In working out a National agricultural program which will function during wartime, consideration must, at the same time, be given to plans which will assist in the necessary readjustment of agriculture to peace conditions, when the war is finally won. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture is prepared to pledge its whole-hearted assistance and support to the development of such a program.

DAIRY INDUSTRY

On behalf of the Canadian dairy farmers, we wish to draw to the attention of the Government, the serious conditions affecting the dairy industry.

The increased cost of labour, concentrates, and farm equipment, tends to decrease production. We are recommending that a parity price of cheese, based on the years 1926 to 1929 (which have already been used for labour) be applied. In our opinion, this price would be

19c per pound. This basic price should then be used to establish a minimum price for butter and other dairy products.

We are also recommending that a more effective means should be used, to secure information with regard to the stock position of butter.

We are attaching hereto, a brief memorandum, based on the decisions of the Annual Meeting of the Federation. Representatives of the Canadian Dairy Farmers' Federation, the National organization representing the dairy producers, are members of this delegation, and will be prepared to deal further with this matter, if required.

LIVE STOCK INDUSTRY

On behalf of the live stock producers represented by the various live stock organizations in the Federation, we desire to reiterate the recommendation submitted a year ago, that a Board of Live Stock Commissioners, with powers to handle and regulate live stock matters, analogous to the existing Board of Grain Commissioners, should be established, to provide adequate protection and assistance to live stock producers. Such a Board would be empowered to deal with all problems arising in the production, transportation, grading, and processing of live stock and live stock products.

We also believe that if the producers of primary farm products in Canada are to receive their just share of the consumers' dollars spent for those products, they should have some control over the marketing processes. To this end, we would again urge the enactment of marketing legislation, which will provide this control.

We are attaching hereto, certain recommendations, based on the conclusions of the representatives attending our Annual Meeting. Reference is made to the method by which an important change was introduced in hog-grading policy, and a recommendation in this connection is submitted, that a further examination should be made, as to the effects of that policy.

Responsible members of live stock organizations are members of this delegation, and they are in a position to go more fully into these recommendations.

WHEAT

In view of the important part which wheat plays in our agricultural economy, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture is particularly con-

cerned with the position of the wheat growers of the Prairie Provinces.

The situation arising from the accumulation of a substantial wheat surplus is too well known to require much elaboration. This matter received the careful consideration of our Annual Meeting, and there are attached hereto, certain recommendations which we believe, if adopted, will be of considerable value to the Western wheat growers in these difficult times.

Included in this delegation are representatives of the three Western Wheat Pools, and of the United Grain Growers, who will be prepared to elaborate on any of the points raised.

MISCELLANEOUS

The Federation would also recommend that the powers of the Wartime Prices and Trade Board be enlarged, to enable the Board, in addition to fixing maximum prices in connection with food, clothing, and shelter, to investigate, and, where necessary, to fix maximum prices for those goods and services entering into the cost of production of agricultural commodities.

We also wish to repeat the recommendations made last year, that in any arrangements or contracts entered into by Governments, or any decisions by Government Boards, affecting the marketing or the price of agricultural products, the principle be adopted, so far as possible, of establishing and maintaining a reasonable degree of parity between agricultural products and all other commodities.

We also recommend that on those Dominion bodies, which may be called upon to negotiate contracts for agricultural products, provision should be made for representatives of recognized farm organizations, directly connected with the commodity concerned.

In conclusion, it is the considered opinion of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, that the basis of a National Agricultural Program must recognize the principle that under existing conditions, irrespective of export values, the domestic prices of farm commodities must bear a proper relationship to production costs, and to general living costs in Canada.

Respectfully submitted.

THE DAIRY INDUSTRY

The Canadian Dairy Farmers' Federation, representing practically every organized dairy producer group in Canada, after having considered the main needs of producers, have submitted the following proposals which have been approved by the Canadian Federation. We therefore recommend:

1. Representation, selected and approved by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, on all boards set up by the Government who buy or market dairy products.
2. A price for cheese milk that will make possible the production and manufacture of enough cheese to satisfy the agreement with Great Britain and meet the requirements of the home market, namely not less than 19c per pound to the producer.
3. If a price of 19c per pound is set for cheese then a minimum price for butter should be arrived at based on the price of cheese.
4. We believe such a price is necessary in order to fill the contract between the British and Canadian Governments and supply the necessary butterfat production for the home market for the following reasons:
 - (a) The price of all feeds used in the production of dairy products has increased considerably, concentrates, roughage, minerals, etc.
 - (b) Living costs, groceries, clothing, etc., show a substantial increase.
 - (c) Labour is difficult to obtain at any price and prospects for further shortage visualized.
 - (d) Milking machines and other equipment being substituted for hand labor at a high cost.
 - (e) The value of dairy cattle in the beef market, value of veal calves tempting the dairy farmer to let the calves do the milking.
 - (f) A live export market for dairy cows in the United States.

All of the above are vital factors, affecting the production of milk.

The only way to remedy the effect of other productive markets, higher production costs, higher living costs is improved prices. Loyalty is not a problem but the necessity of price to enable us to produce is essential.

Butter Peg

The peg on butter, which was made effective as of December 12th, 1940, came as a serious shock to the whole dairy industry, the law of supply and demand having functioned during the high production period to the extent of forcing prices down to an almost irreducible minimum, then when the producers were looking forward to somewhat recuperating their losses the peg goes on.

We submit that the price at which butter was pegged was not an equitable price in the light of the cost of production.

It is suggested that whereas the average level of wages of labor in the years 1926-1929 has been endorsed by the Government as a standard for wage scales, that the same years be used in arriving at the proper adjustment of dairy values.

Oleo Margarine

If and when the question of importation of oleo margarine becomes a matter for discussion that representatives of the dairy producers be called in consultation.

We feel that valuable assistance can be given the dairy branch of the Department of Agriculture by our executive as they represent producer thought throughout Canada. Fully realizing the national crisis we offer our co-operation in order to establish a condition that will meet with national approval.

LIVE STOCK

Our live stock industry today holds a stronger relative position in the Canadian farm economy as a result of the shrinkage in our exports of wheat, and the increase in the British quota for Canadian bacon.

While live stock producers appreciate and commend the large increase negotiated by your Government in the tonnage of hog products to the United Kingdom, we are deeply disappointed at the lower price paid to the producer. We have no fault to find with the reduction of price to the war-harassed consumers of Britain, but we believe that the Canadian producers should not have to bear the whole cost of this reduction in price and that the former price levels should have been maintained, either by a higher domestic price which consumers with increased spending power could afford to pay, or by direct Government support.

Last September your Department of Agriculture, without prior notice to the producers interested, decreed that commencing October 1st, all hogs marketed would be graded on a carcass basis. This ruling wiped out the policy of live hog grading that had been optional with rail grading for a number of years. Without entering into any discussion as to the respective merits and defects of these two systems, there is general resentment among producers at the way in which the one hundred per cent rail grading of all marketed hogs was forced on them. They cannot see the need for this abrupt departure from a policy of long standing. Had the opportunity been extended to them they would have appreciated an opportunity to discuss the whole question with members of your Government or officers of the Department of Agriculture.

While many farmers are satisfied with the returns they receive for their hogs graded on the rail, compared with their former returns from the live grading, we believe there are even more who do not consider price returns as improvements over those received when the hogs were graded alive. There remains throughout Canada a great deal of dissention arising from the wide variation between the values received from groups of hogs now marketed under rail grading, and similar groups of hogs of like breeding, feeding and weight, sold but a few months earlier and to which live grades had been applied. We urge that the Department of Agriculture determine the reasons for these variations, and apply the correctives that may be indicated as necessary.

Representations have come to your Cabinet from our Federation of Agriculture on a number of previous occasions, respecting the desirability of the enactment of federal legislation that will confer upon primary producers of farm commodities the right to a measure of self-determination in marketing procedures. We wish to restate the request for that legislation. With enactments of this type now on the statute books of eight of the nine Canadian Provinces, we respectfully submit the time is opportune for your Government to provide the enabling legislation necessary for inter-Provincial producer collaboration in marketing matters.

In May, 1940, there was placed before a group of your colleagues by our representatives, a recommendation that there be established a Board of Live Stock Commissioners. It was then stated such a Board, analogous in structure and in function to the Board of Grain Commis-

sioners, should be of equal value to Live Stock producers. We remain convinced that such a Board could be of considerable value at this time in the creating of confidence among farmers who would know that they had an agency to which they could turn with applications for adjustments on all occasions. It is our hope your Government will now see fit to grant this request.

WHEAT

In the days that lie ahead, it may be that a measure of adjustment of agricultural production may be found necessary in the great wheat growing areas of the Prairie Provinces, which may involve the reappraisal of Western agricultural resources so that a balance in agricultural production may be established.

In the meantime, the problem created by heavy surpluses is a very real one for the Western wheat grower.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture recommends:

(1) That while an adjustment program may be found necessary in the future, it is not advisable at the present time, to introduce compulsory restriction of acreage seeded to wheat.

(2) For the coming crop year, we believe that the Dominion Government, through the Wheat Board, should undertake to announce the total amount of wheat of which it is prepared to accept delivery. We believe that the amount of wheat which may be delivered by the grower in the crop season of 1941-42 should be based on the estimated amount which the Wheat Board may be reasonably expected to market during the 1941-42 crop year, including both export and domestic sales. Having established the maximum amount which may be delivered, we recommend that the individual grower's delivery quota should be based on a policy which will preserve to each farm unit an equitable share of such maximum amount in proportion to the past production of the crop district in which it is located.

(3) That because of the restricted deliveries and in order to maintain the income of the Western farm home, steps should be taken to increase the initial payment for wheat delivered in the crop year of 1941.

(4) That until such time as the price of wheat reaches and is maintained at a level commensurate with the price of those things

that enter into the cost of producing wheat, a processing tax of not less than 50 cents per bushel be placed on all wheat milled for domestic consumption. The revenue from such tax to be added to the aggregate price received for the wheat marketed and be available for the purpose of increasing the initial payment to the farmer.

(5) It is anticipated that at the end of the current crop year, all existing grain storage facilities will be filled. We believe that these surpluses of bread grains may become an important factor in our war effort and that in the meantime, they should be regarded as a reserve which will insure a constant supply of wheat to Great Britain in the event of possible crop failure in the course of the war, and also be available to meet the needs of the people of Europe when the war is won.

(6) In view of the foregoing, and because we believe that the maintenance of reserve stocks of grain on the farm provides an effective form of crop insurance under existing conditions, we recommend that the Dominion Government be asked to provide financial assistance to farmers for the construction of adequate farm storage facilities to enable the farmer to adjust his deliveries in accordance with the system outlined above.

(7) It is recommended that the practice inaugurated during the present crop year, of paying farm storage, be continued through the coming crop season, and that the amount of the farm storage accruing due to individual farmers, be used to repay any advances made to them which may be made for the purpose of providing additional storage facilities.

(8) Since it is anticipated that practically no elevator storage space will be available at the time of the 1941 harvest, we recommend that the Dominion Government authorize the Canadian Wheat Board to make cash advances against that portion of the 1941 crop which the farmer can deliver under the arrangement outlined above during the crop year 1941-42.



PERSONNEL OF DELEGATION FROM THE CANADIAN FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE, WHICH MET THE PRIME MINISTER AND MEMBERS OF HIS CABINET, MONDAY, JANUARY 27th, 1941.

H. H. Hannam	<i>President, Canadian Federation of Agriculture—Toronto, Ontario.</i>
G. C. Coote	<i>Secretary, Canadian Federation of Agriculture—Nanton, Alberta.</i>
R. H. M. Bailey	<i>Managing Director, Alberta Milk and Inspected Cream Producers' Ass'n.—Edmonton, Alberta.</i>
G. R. Bickerton	<i>President, United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section—Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.</i>
T. O. Bobier	<i>Director, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool,—Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.</i>
E. W. Brunsden	<i>Secretary, Alberta Federation of Agriculture—Calgary, Alberta.</i>
E. J. Chambers	<i>President, Associated Growers of B.C.—Vernon, B.C.</i>
J. T. Hull	<i>Secretary, Western Agricultural Conference—Winnipeg, Manitoba.</i>
L. Hutchinson	<i>Chairman, Alberta Wheat Pool—Calgary, Alberta.</i>
J. A. Marion	<i>President, L'Union Chatholique des Cultivateurs—Montreal, P.Q.</i>
R. E. Mayberry	<i>Past President, Cream Producers' Ass'n—Ingersoll, Ontario.</i>
R. G. Mayberry	<i>Member, Cream Producers' Ass'n.—Ingersoll, Ontario.</i>
W. C. McKenzie	<i>Manager, Southern Alberta Co-operative Ass'n—Lethbridge, Alberta.</i>
J. J. McLellan	<i>Vice-President, United Grain Growers Ltd.—Purple Springs, Alberta.</i>
W. A. McLeod	<i>Canadian Co-operative Wheat Producers—Winnipeg, Manitoba.</i>
A. H. Mercer	<i>General Manager, Fraser Valley Milk Producers' Ass'n—Vancouver, B.C.</i>
V. S. Milburn	<i>Secretary, Canadian Dairy Farmers' Federation—Toronto, Ontario.</i>
R. H. Milliken	<i>Saskatchewan Wheat Pool—Regina, Saskatchewan.</i>
W. Parker	<i>President, Manitoba Pool Elevators—Winnipeg, Manitoba.</i>
G. E. Parry	<i>Executive, Alberta Milk and Inspected Cream Producers' Ass'n—Lethbridge, Alberta.</i>
G. Robertson	<i>Secretary, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool—Regina, Saskatchewan.</i>
P. E. Roblin	<i>President, Saskatchewan Livestock Co-operative—Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.</i>
R. J. Scott	<i>President, United Farmers' Co-op. Company—Toronto, Ontario.</i>
K. A. Wheaton	<i>New Brunswick Farmers' Association—River Glade, N.B.</i>
